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Contact: Matt Lambert/Jocelyn Rogers
(202) 225-2132

****EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER THE BILL PASSES THE HOUSE THIS EVENING****

OKC Role in Border Security Increases ***Istook Secures Further Funds for Training Pilots Who Patrol the Border***

Washington, D.C. –The U.S. Customs National Aviation Center (CNAC) based in Oklahoma City is poised to step up its role in stemming the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States, announces Congressman Ernest Istook. In addition to its customary funds, CNAC is slated to receive an extra \$1.4-million for computer-based training programs for pilots who patrol the U.S./Mexico border. The money is part of enhanced border security funding in the Homeland Security appropriations passed by the House Thursday evening.

“The CNAC can now use computer simulators to train pilots, like our military does,” says Istook. “This program also cuts down on aircraft expenses and allows pilots to train for a tough job without the risk of accidents.”

The Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2006 (H.R. 2360) provides funds for significant increases in border security, including 1,000 more Border Patrol agents, plus several hundred new enforcement agents in the rest of the country. It also funds thousands of new detention beds, so those apprehended won’t have to be released for lack of facilities to hold them. And it provides funds for training state and local law enforcement to help in deterring illegal immigration.

“This will put more agents at the border and in the rest of the country just as fast as it’s possible to train them,” added Istook. “In addition to the 1,000 new Border Patrol Agents, and hundreds more away from the border, it expands our cutting-edge technology used to screen high-risk cargo coming through our ports.

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